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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ADANA 000089

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR JUNE 26, 2007

¶1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for June 26, 2007. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL:

¶2. SABAH (GUNEV) / BOLGE: Kursat Tuzmen, state minister and Mersin's candidate from AKP met with businessmen engaged in transportation business in Mersin. He called them hidden heroes of society, and said he understood very well the problems and hardships involved in the transportation business and the risks undertaken in foreign countries by shippers. Meanwhile, Bolge daily reports Adana people's anger over Kursat Tuzmen's and Omer Celik's (AKP's second ranking candidate in Adana) alliance to endorse the plan to move the airport in Adana to the Tarsus district of Mersin. The daily wonders how Adana Mayor Aytac Durak would respond to this new development since he has always stood firm against past moves to change the location of the airport.

¶3. HURRIYET / CUMHURIYET / GUNDEM: Orhan Dogan, former DEP deputy, had a heart attack on stage as he was delivering a speech at an art and culture event in Agri's Dogubeyazit district the previous day. The health condition of Dogan is severe, he is currently unconscious and doctors said that he had gone into a cardiological shock because of his late arrival at the hospital. Dogan's family, former DEP deputies Leyla Zana, Sirri Sakik, Hatip Dicle and Selim Sadak, Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir, some other district mayors and local party chairmen from DTP have been waiting anxiously at the Van Centennial University hospital.

¶4. GUNDEM: The daily alleges that in a sharp contrast with the rallies of independent candidates held in other sections of Diyarbakir which attracted large crowds into squares, the Prime Minister's political rally in Diyarbakir the previous day did not attract much public attention. Aysel Tugluk, the independent Diyarbakir candidate running in the first constituency in Diyarbakir, opened one of her campaign offices in Baglar district and the ceremony held was reportedly attended by nearly 10,000 people. Meanwhile, Nazmi Gur's, the fourth ranking independent candidate in Adana, election campaign is reportedly at full speed and Gur has been opening his campaign offices in Denizli, Ova and Onur quarters of the province. The daily provides reports on other campaign offices opened by the independent candidates of Tunceli, Mersin, Hakkari, Sanliurfa and Mardin provinces.

¶ 15. GUNDEM: The daily talks with people in Sirnak, a province located within the area where the Turkish Chief of Staff declared a "Security Zone," and asks them their political inclinations. The total number of seats that can be won from Sirnak is three. It is almost definite, reports the daily, that two independent candidates endorsed by DTP, namely Sevahir Bayindir, a female candidate, and Attorney Hasip Kaplan, will win seats. The daily further reports that AKP's first ranking candidate, Veli Seyda, is no longer as popular as he used to be in Sirnak.

¶ 16. HURRIYET: A columnist draws attention to the bitter election competition in Igdır province where a total of 60,000 votes will be divided between two dominant groups in the province: Azeris and Kurds. Igdır is one of the two provinces where AKP was not able to win any seats in the last elections. (The other one was Tunceli.) Therefore, AKP is working hard in its campaign run in Igdır. The columnist also points out that the independent candidate in Igdır, Pervin Buldan, who is endorsed by DTP, is not very welcome in the province, since she is an outsider who comes from Hakkari. After Erdogan's rally held in Igdır on June 19, CHP Leader Deniz Baykal will also hold a rally there on June 3rd. Since votes for MHP in Igdır are weak, it is not yet definite whether MHP leader will pay a visit to the province.

¶ 17. GUNDEM: The daily observes that Prime Minister Erdogan toughened his stance against DTP in the days that followed his meeting with Yasar Buyukanit, the head of the Turkish Chief of Staff, and he started branding DTP as a "racist party," a phrase which Buyukanit reportedly formerly used against DTP.

¶ 18. EKSPRES / BOLGE: The family of the oil tanker truck driver, with whose truck terrorists carried out a suicide bomb attack at a jandarma station in Tunceli over the weekend (see

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press summary for June 25), were in grief in Adana over the sad news about how the driver was victimized by the terrorists' attack, reports the daily. Bolge daily reports that the driver, as the terrorist forced him to drive towards the jandarma station, was able to warn the security personnel at the station through signaling the vehicles lights.

¶ 19. GUNDEM: Yusuf Alatas, the chairperson of Human Rights Association (HRA), resigned from office due to his health problems. Reyhan Yalcindag, the deputy chairperson, has been appointed as the new chairperson of the association.

¶ 10. GUNDEM: The daily claims that JITEM (Jandarma Intelligence) members are offering villagers in the southeastern region 10,000 YTL bounty on the head of the terrorists.

#### SECURITY

¶ 11. GUNDEM: Fire broke out in a section of the Gabar Mountain in Sirnak allegedly following the military operation Turkish Armed Forces conducted in the area. Three teams of firefighters have not been able to extinguish the fire yet.

#### ECONOMY

¶ 12. BOLGE: A 5-kilometer truck line has been formed in front of the Cilvegozu Border Gate with Syria in Hatay because of efforts undertaken to renovate the border gate facilities. The construction activities will reportedly end around September.

#### CULTURE / SOCIETY / ENVIRONMENT

¶ 13. GUNDEM: There has been a heated dispute going on in Adana's Security Directorate between administration and the staff over how the administration will spend 400,000 YTL a local bank branch gave to have the directorate deposit the salaries of the personnel in their bank. While the administration is opting

for buying new police cars for the office, the staff wants the money distributed as a bonus to the personnel.

¶14. GUNDEM: A 17-year-old girl hanged herself and committed suicide in Siirt's Kurtalan district.

¶15. YENI SAFAK: The businessmen in Sirnak's Cizre district are closing their shops between 12.00 and 4 p.m. because of the intense heat reaching to 50 degree Celsius. (122 degree Fahrenheit)

GREEN